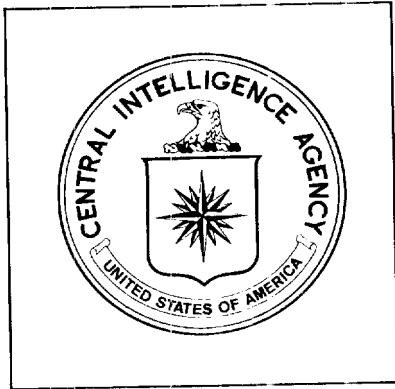


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172

October 17, 1975
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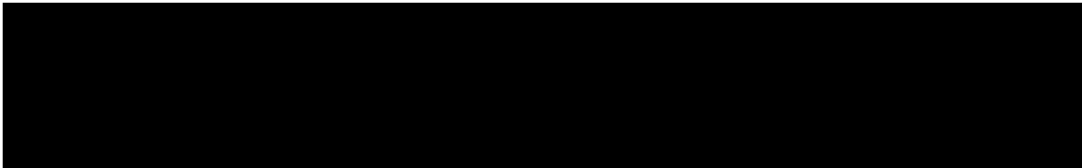
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This publication is prepared for regional specialists in the Washington community by the USSR - Eastern Europe Division, Office of Current Intelligence, with occasional contributions from other offices within the Directorate of Intelligence. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles.

CONTENTS

October 17, 1975



25X1D

Czechoslovakia Sentences Participants.	4
New Soviet Diesel Locomotive Fails To Make Grade.	5
Military Department Identified at USA and Canada Institute	6

25X1D

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~~SECRET SPOKE~~

Czechoslovakia Sentences Participants
in Helicopter Escape Incident

A Czechoslovak court has convicted three persons who were involved in the helicopter exfiltration of three East German citizens from Czechoslovakia to West Germany in mid-August (*Staff Notes*, August 21 and 22). Taddeus Kobrzynski and Helga Neukirchner, who were apprehended on the scene, were sentenced to six and three years respectively. Pilot Barry Meeker, a US citizen who was tried in absentia, got 10 years.

The presiding judge cited the "socially dangerous criminal acts" of the accused, their "despicable motives," and their alleged firing on Czechoslovak border guards. Press observers in the courtroom noted, however, that the indictments did not charge that the defendants shot at border guards. Czechoslovak officials have said that the helicopter was armed, an accusation Meeker has flatly denied. (CONFIDENTIAL)

25X1A

October 17, 1975

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SECRET SPOKE

New Soviet Diesel Locomotive
Fails To Make the Grade

Soviet plans to improve the efficiency of rail transportation of freight during 1976-80 have suffered a setback. A new diesel locomotive, the 2TE116, which has been under development for several years, has proved to be extremely unreliable in test runs carried out for more than four years. The locomotive is designed to carry loads of up to 23 tons per axle compared with 20 tons or less for most mainline diesels in use. Officials at Voroshilovgrad in the Ukraine, where the locomotive is built, attribute operational failures to the poor quality of components and to the lack of adequate testing and quality control in assembly.

Failure to start serial production of the new diesel by the beginning of the next five year plan period in January is causing planners considerable worry; transport plans have been formulated, in part, on the expectation of an advanced diesel locomotive that could serve at least the next two or three five year plans. Although unwilling to proceed with production of the new engine, the Ministry of Railways still is faced with the job of providing improved, reliable engines to handle a growing volume of freight each year. A modified version of the USSR's largest and most extensively built diesel locomotive, the 2TE10, is being readied for production and will be used until problems with the more advanced 2TE116 are resolved. (UNCLASSIFIED)

25X1A

October 17, 1975

SECRET SPOKE

Military Department Identified
at USA and Canada Institute

The September 1975 issue of *USA: Economics, Politics and Ideology* has identified arms control specialist and military strategist Mikhail Milshteyn as head of the Military Department at the USA and Canada Institute (IUSAC), ending some confusion about Milshteyn's true position in the institute's organizational framework. A retired lieutenant general who once headed a chair at the Academy of the General Staff, Milshteyn has been with IUSAC since at least July 1971. While he was known to be heading an IUSAC unit on military matters, that unit was at one time reported to be a section subordinate to the Institute's Foreign Policy Department. Milshteyn's official identification as department chief, however, means that his unit is at least roughly equivalent in status to the institute's four other departments--Foreign Policy, Economics, Management and Social and Domestic Issues. (CONFIDENTIAL)

25X1A

October 17, 1975

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